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The Law of Christian Rebuke ; 5.
A PLEA FOR SLAVE-HOLDERS.

A

S E R M O N,

DELIVERED AT MIDDLETOWN, CONN.,

BEFORE THE

ANTI-SLAVERY CONVENTION

OF

MINISTERS AND OTHER CHRISTIANS,

OCTOBER 18, 1843.

BY J. BURT,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, IN CANTON, CONN.

HARTFORD:

N. W. GOODRICH & CO.....PRINTERS,
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In Convention, October 18th, 1843;— On motion, it was

Resolved, That Messrs. A. F. Williams, and J. W. North, be appointed a Committee to request a copy of the Sermon delivered by Rev. Mr. Burt, for publication.

S E R M O N .

“Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.”

LEV. XIX. 17.

THE moral precepts of the Bible have one character. They are equally important and obligatory, whether written in the Old Testament or the New; whether interspersed with laws adapted to the particular circumstances of a particular people, or embodied in a distinct moral code. They are all founded in the great, unvarying principles of truth and right; and in their nature are such, as to “approve themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” These moral precepts of the Bible, with the considerations, which enforce their due regard, constitute that power, ever effectual, in its proper application, to the securing of great moral results. The text is one of these moral precepts. And it is just as valuable in the book of Leviticus, as the same moral precept is in the books of the New Testament. It is that which is right and binding in itself; which is not, and cannot be, changed by accident or circumstances. This precept, enjoining upon man the rebuking of his fellow-man for that, which is unjust; which is a violation of truth and righteousness, is, in its nature, just as Christian,—just as obligatory as that, which we have in Luke (17 : 3.) “Take heed to yourselves : if thy brother trespass against thee, *rebuke* him.” It is a precept often repeated in the Scriptures ; and urged as a Christian

duty. And it readily commends itself, as a duty of great practical importance and obvious utility. Hence, the peculiar emphasis given to it in the text. "Thou shalt in *any wise* rebuke thy neighbor :"—*surely*, thou shalt not fail of doing it. Or, as the Hebrew, in its peculiar idiom, hath it,—“Rebuke—thou shalt rebuke thy fellow-man and not suffer sin upon him.” Whether in the last clause, the *textual* reading or the *marginal* be the correct one, will not materially affect the duty in question. But if the *marginal* reading be the correct one,—of which evidence is not wanting,—“*that thou bear not sin for him,*” it contains an argument enforcing the duty in question of great practical weight. Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor for his errors and sins,—lest thou suffer sin for him, or become thyself a partaker of his sin by neglecting thy duty in not rebuking him. Then it is equivalent to the voice from heaven calling upon God’s people to come out of the Apocalyptic Babylon, which, among other things, had been guilty of trading in the *bodies* and *souls* of men ; that they *partake not of her sins* and receive not of her plagues.*

Man is a social being. He has concern in the weal and woe of his fellows. And never but in the spirit of Abel’s brother can he say—“Am I my brother’s keeper?” As social beings we are to seek each other’s good, and, so far as in us lies, ward off the evils to which we are respectively exposed. To this the great law of Love would bind us.—Faithful rebuke is the legitimate fruit of love to man. Rebuke supposes sin, errors,—wrong of some kind. We are not called upon to rebuke our fellow-men for that which is right. Faithful, Christian rebuke is a labor, in the spirit of love, to convince the erring of the evil of their way, and kind endeavor to reclaim them from that way,—to convince the sinning of their wrong, and persuade them to abandon that wrong. The duty in its application may be as extensive, as

* Rev. 18 : 4 and 13. Greek—*bodies* instead of *slaves*.

the wicked practices of men. But my object now is to call your attention to the

LAW OF CHRISTIAN REBUKE, in its application to the sin of slave-holding.

Slave-holding is the holding of human beings as property. In the language of law,—“A slave is one who is in the power of a master to whom he belongs. His master may sell him; dispose of his person,—his industry,—his labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything, but what must belong to his master.”* This, either expressed or implied, is the grand law of the slave-system in the United States and Territories. In the language of a distinguished jurist,† this is the cardinal principle of slavery,—that the slave is not to be ranked among *sentient beings*, but among *things*. And this cardinal principle clearly enough distinguishes this condition of servitude and subjection from others with which it is often confounded. Slave-holding, then, is the holding of fellow-beings in this condition, and the using of them according to this law. It is the *voluntary* act of the holder. And for that act he is responsible. No power can compel a man to be a slave-holder. We adopt here the old maxim, “where there is a will there is a way,” as true doctrine. We have yet to learn the first instance of an individual’s attempt to free himself from the sin of slave-holding;—and, in the fear of God, doing all he could,—yet, failing in the attempt. One such instance would settle the question; that all slave-holding is not sin; for God requireth of a man “according to that he hath and not according to that he hath not.”

This system and its sustainers have claims, founded on the authority of God, to appropriate and faithful Christian rebuke. And the responsibility is upon Christians to meet this claim. We are not called upon to declare war against an enemy and pitch battle;—but to discharge a high Christian duty. We are to do it in obedience to God,—and from love to man.

* Louisiana Code.

† STROUD:

And I see not how we can be indifferent to this claim and be innocent. There is too much for time and for eternity at stake.

If, then, we are prepared to meet the question of responsibility,—we will first look at the claim of slave-holding to Christian rebuke ; and then, consider the way in which this rebuke should be administered.

I. Slave-holding should be rebuked. This is Christian Law. God requires it. The requisition is founded in good reason. In entering this plea for the slave-holder, his abettors and apologists, I shall be under the necessity of asking you to look at them in their circumstances and prospects.—Painful though the view may be, we must take it.

At first view, we see in these United States and Territories *two millions six hundred thousand* chattelized human beings;—intellectual, immortal, fellow-beings;—the workmanship of God, reduced to the condition of things or stock. They are to live, and move, and act for those, who claim to be their possessors. This is all plain matter of fact ; so plain, that nobody would risk his reputation by expressing doubt of it. But for whom is this vast company of fellow-beings in this subject and crushing condition ? The only true answer is,—for the slave-holders,—using this term here to describe the actual holders of men in slavery, and those, who sustain them in thus doing by their interest in the system, or from other considerations and motives. Upon them, therefore, rests the responsibility.

Look now at the *two hundred and fifty thousand* slave-holders, and their helpers in this Union,—sustaining a system of legalized wrong, under which *two millions six hundred thousand* of their fellow-beings are groaning out life's rough pilgrimage;—and multitudes of them watching for its period, “as they that watch for the morning,”—and do you not see, that theirs is no enviable position ? Nor will it be denied that the responsibility of this system and all that legitimately attaches

to it, rests upon the slave-holders. For whom else does it exist? All beside them and those, who in some way are interested in sustaining the system, pray for its removal. But that prayer cannot be heard. If it approach,—it cannot enter the ear of power. It is, therefore, the slave-holders, their abettors and apologists, who stand, as monumental pillars, upholding this crumbling edifice. When these give way, the rotten fabric will fall. And give way they must, ere long, or be crushed beneath its ruins.

Here, then, you see the slave-holders and their helpers occupying a central position,—God above them and looking down; and around them circling, in close proximity, the vast company of our nation's slaves;—God's intelligent beings made things! No: claimed to be things; and reduced to this condition,—not by assumption merely,—but by assumption under the enactments of positive law. There is no nature in the relation. It is all arbitrary;—all forced. The persons described, shall be so and so, to “all intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever.” Hence, all the municipal regulations in the slave-holding sections of this country, which have respect to this species of property have the same “image and superscription.” The point at which they all aim is, to keep the slave from becoming a man and make him profitable. Nature and nature's God would make the slave a man. Municipal regulation, the work of interested man, rising in the face of heaven, would prevent this. “He is not to be reckoned among *sentient beings*;—but among *things*.” The first work, therefore, which slavery does, is to crush the man;—that he may be molded into the thing. He must implicitly obey his master in every thing; and submit, unhesitatingly, to his master's will. Right or wrong there is no appeal. Is this doubted? We put, then, the question: May a slave in any case refuse to obey his master, or to submit to his will? Impanel a jury of slave-holders,—and let them bring in their verdict on this question, and we will abide the

judgment,—as to the matter of law and fact. Admit—that the slave may refuse to obey his master, and you admit that the slave is a man and has rights. Hence,—the Louisiana Code says, of the slaves, “they ought to yield to the white man on *every* occasion.” Where, then, is the exception?—Right or wrong they must submit. In this condition, the slave is thrown out of all due protection of property,—family,—person, limb and life. “He can acquire nothing;—possess nothing;—defend nothing.” He is, absolutely, to all intents and purposes in the power of the master to whom he belongs. Let his treatment be what it may,—or let the treatment of those, whom he loves, as his own life—as wife or children, be what it may,—to raise his hand in defense, or even to remonstrate, is a crime to be punished, not by the “judges,” but by the irresponsible master, or his willing agent. All his education is graduated and to be graduated by the will of the possessor, so called, and not by the will and authority of God. And it is settled law,—that the slave must not have knowledge,—although, “that the soul be without knowledge is not good.” He must not be elevated to the rank of a thinking, willing being, for obvious reason. Elevate him, and he is a man. He will think, reason, conclude;—have a will of his own; assert his rights; and, by the help of God, regain them. The laws of the slave-holding sections of this country are proof of what we here affirm. To teach a slave to read, or put into his hand the key of knowledge, is penal. Go to South Carolina and give to a single child of oppression a single *Tract*, on which is impressed God’s First Commandment, “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,” and you are liable to arrest and imprisonment for the deed.—But I cannot dwell on the detail of slavery’s doings. It is a crushing system from beginning to end. Mental, moral and religious light, to a most fearful extent, it puts out. Is it claimed, that all this severity, and all this cruelty, are necessarily incident to the system? Be it so. That fact shows

what the system is ; and is itself one of the most powerful arguments against it.

Thus far, we have been looking at the slave-holders in their circumstances ;—and we have seen them in the centre of a vast plain, with two millions six hundred thousand slaves circling about them, in a condition of debasement, suffering and crime,—settled by well attested facts, that defies a parallel. This is the first group, which we see around the slave-holders. No enviable position, surely. The system to which they cling with the tenacity of life, is not such, as will be coveted by one whose soul is imbued with the spirit of rational and Christian liberty.

It is a wasting system throughout. You see this, in the sterile soil of the “Old Dominion,”—once as fertile, as any land, “that the sun shines upon.” You see it in the depreciation of the value of property in the slave-holding sections of the country. A distinguished individual* of the State of Maryland, in a recent public address, said, that from the best data he could obtain, the depreciation of value of real property in that State, within four years, was not less than *sixty-five millions*. The debt of the State is about fifteen millions,—drawing interest at the rate of nearly one hundred dollars per hour. And as no provision is now made for the payment of this interest, the debt goes on accumulating.—Why this depreciation of the value of property, and this insupportable, accumulating debt, in a State possessing the natural advantages of Maryland? The statesman gives us the fact ; but he does not care to trace that fact back to its legitimate cause,—the blight of slavery. It is a wasting system. You see this, also, in the accumulated Southern debts, generally, crippling Northern industry and increasing Northern liabilities ;—and obstructing the channels of healthful commerce.

* Wm. Cost Johnson in a recent speech before the Planters of St. Mary's on the assumption of the Debts of the insolvent States by the General Government.—See *Emancipator*, Oct. 12th, 1843.

And, then, the *perils* of the system. Bolts and bars and guards and dirks and pistols and bowie-knives tell the story. We are told of the perils, *prospective*, of emancipation. Are there no perils in slavery continued? The history of emancipation and the history of slavery answer. Add to these the peculiar depression of morals incident to the system. I cannot stop here to give you the items, which lie thick around me as the leaves of Autumn.*

Besides,—the system cherishes a spirit at war with all, that is lovely and blissful in life. Trained from earliest childhood to be a lord and make the slave obey, what does maturity of life present—but that childhood matured? And, finally, religion, graduated and to be graduated by a system, which makes heathenism in its midst darker than, where there is no gospel, calls upon us to pity and rebuke the upholders of that system. Thus far the first group.

Next,—you see the traffickers in the bodies and souls of men.

They are deeply interested in every thing, which affects, or which is supposed to affect the Domestic Trade. By this they have their wealth. Here you see the prisons, and all the necessary implements and facilities for carrying on this diabolical business. Mark here, as the legitimate fruit of this traffic, the groans and tears and heart-breakings of “them that are oppressed,” and, who “have no comforter.” No marvel, that the preacher added, “Wherefore I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive.”† All this is to be set down to the slave-holding account;—all circling around the central body.

Then come the legislators and the whole company of obsequious politicians to do the bidding of that central power.

* See the testimony in “American Slavery as it is,” and other works, showing the influence of Slavery on *morals*.

† Eccl. 4:2.

Fear not that I am departing from the moral and religious bearings of the great question, which has convened us.—“He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.” This is my apology, if apology be needed. Acts of legislation are moral acts. They are right or wrong,—not only politically, but, also, morally; in as much as they have direct bearing upon all the great moral interests of the community; and, in as much,---as he to whom all rulers are amenable, requires them to be a “terror to evil-doers and a praise to them, that do well.” This central power has given shape and direction to the governmental operations of this nation to an alarming extent, for a long period of years; and it has fully controlled those of the several slave-holding States. If not, why is it so resolutely and so perseveringly insisted,—that nothing shall be said or done in the high places of power, which will tend, efficiently, to the exposure and overthrow of Slavery? Why is the cry of thousands and tens of thousands in the ear of power, from year to year, denied a hearing? And yet again,—why is it that an Hon. Senator* stands up in his place, and, in an elaborate speech, attempts to defend the “Peculiar Institution,” in opposition to the encroachments of *Liberty*; maintaining the monstrous doctrine, that what the “Law declares to be property, *is property*,” and “that two hundred years of legislation have sanctioned and *sanctified* negro slaves as property?” Our legislators, then, have only to enact, that the *Hon. Senator*, and his posterity, shall be property to all “intents, constructions and purposes whatsoever,”—and, upon his own doctrine, he and his *are* property. And who,—save one,† for the last quarter of a century, has stood up on that same floor of the United States Senate and manfully defended the great principles of Liberty in opposition to the encroachments of Slavery? When we say,—that the public functionaries gath-

* Hon. Henry Clay.

† Hon. Thomas Morris, of Ohio.

er around this central power and are obsequious to do its will,—we do not say all,—but enough to control the affairs of the nation—to depress liberty in the support of slavery. And it is no light thing to be responsible for all this.

Look again, and you see a great company with oppressed hearts pleading, for the deliverance of the *bond-man*, gathering around in an outer circle. They have looked till their hearts feel and their tears flow,—and they cry to heaven,—“O Lord, how long !” They plead, also, with their neighbor to “undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free.” With them it is no ephemeral impression that slavery is a mighty wrong,—sinful in its nature and offensive ever to a righteous God.

Once more ;—in the view and hard pressing upon the last circle is another, crying for quiet ;—and in the language of some of old, saying, “Let us alone, let us alone,—what have we to do with” all these abominations,—abominations though they be. And that central company hears the cry and responds its right hearty—*Amen*. So would we have it.

Next,—the civilized world closes in to see and to reprobate the occasion of this mighty gathering. And they utter a voice, “like the voice of many waters,” in kind and fraternal faithfulness, which echoes and re-echoes through the land,—“Brethren, do not so wickedly.” Break the yoke and deliver those, who, equally with yourselves, have “right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Give to them that which is just and equal.

And finally, comes the mourning—bleeding church. Yes. Though in the outer circle and “last, not least,” she comes ;—and by her sacred interests,—and the blight, which slavery has sent through all her palaces, she asks to be heard. She looks away into that central company and sees there her members.—brethren and sisters of the spiritual family of God, partaking in all the sin and all the cruelty of that merciless system. She sees not only those who have become

slave-holders by inheritance ; but those, also, who were born and trained amid the light and liberty of New-England privileges,—who have gone down to the dark land, become participators in its sins, and are, consequently, exposed to be partakers of its plagues. The church sees. She feels. But what can she do? She is about to cry, “Come out of her, my people;”—and the deep murmuring of sullen rebuke, rising in her bosom, stifles her voice. “Keep silence, or you rive the church.” Why? Can Christians barter in the bodies and the souls of men;—and use them for lucre, and be innocent? Can they contribute to sustain a system upon which God has written his curse, and may we not speak of the trespass? The church will yet speak,—speak as she never has. She must,—or God will render his “rebukes with flames of fire.” And when she speaks, her voice will be heard. Not a relation—not an interest throughout this wide land is there, which is not affected to a greater or less extent by this system of legalized wrong. Keep in mind,—that the responsibility of all this rests upon slave-holders and their helpers. They create the demand for all that slavery is—for all that slavery *does*. And can they meet the issue? Meet it they must. We have now glanced at slave-holders in their circumstances and relations,—and we are sure,—that theirs is no enviable position. Our sketch is but a meagre outline of those concentric circles of beings,—sympathies, interests and influences, which surround the slave-holding portion of our fellow-countrymen. The filling up is in the every day operation of the system. “More in sorrow than in anger,” we ask, if they have not claim on the friends of God and man for faithful, Christian rebuke. Their circumstances and relations show this claim. And, then, their prospects. We have been looking at them, as in fixed position. But they are not stationary. In the midst of this mighty group, the slave-holders are moving *onward*, ONWARD, ONWARD,—to meet their responsibilities in the issues of pro-

bation. And can the church of God look on and hold her peace? Can she look on and let them go,—unwarned,—*unentreated*,—UNREBUKED? No, my brethren, should she do it, “the stones would cry out.” The responsibility is upon us. If we regard the temporal and eternal well-being of those, who, in this sin, are going to the judgment of the great day,—let us meet it. Let us do what we can for their deliverance,—a deliverance, which can be obtained only through the abandonment of the sin. It is bad enough to be a slave; but immeasurably worse to be a slave-holder. There is as much of truth as of poetry in those memorable lines of Cowper:—

—— “dear as Freedom is, and, in my heart’s
Just estimation, prized above all price,—
I had much rather be myself the slave,
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.”

Who that duly appreciates moral worth, and the favor of God, does not heartily respond to that sentiment?

Slave-holding, then, should be rebuked. The law of love requires it. The command of God enjoins it. “Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor and not suffer sin upon him.”

II. How should this rebuke be administered?

In general, we answer,—in that way which is best adapted to secure the end in view. That end is the conviction of the slave-holder of his sin in the matter under consideration, and the persuasion of him to abandon that sin. “He that confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy.”

Particularly,—the rebuke should be administered *kindly*.

In approaching our fellow-men to lay before them their own wrongs and sins, kindness of spirit and kindness of manner, other things being equal, all admit to be most hopeful. Hard names and opprobrious epithets tend rather to repel, than to win the transgressor. If we would convince our slave-holding neighbors of their great injustice and their fear-

ful sin against God, we should speak to them as friends,—as those who are influenced by the high principles of the gospel of Christ ; and a regard to *their* highest good, as well as to the good of their suffering slaves. On this point, there is no difference of opinion, however widely we may differ on the question,—What constitutes *kind* rebuke ?

Rebuke should be administered *intelligently*.

If you speak to your fellow-man of his wrong doings, you should know whereof you affirm. To rebuke the slave-holder, intelligently, you must know what slaveholding is. How else can you meet his inquiries and assumptions,—wrest from him his false positions, and expose his fallacies ? The church of God should be well versed in the nature and operations of the slave-system, to be qualified to administer the needed rebuke. Hence,—there must be teaching on this subject ;—there must be reading ; there must be inquiry. To aver that we have always been Anti-Slavery,—always known that it was wrong ; and, even, that we are as much opposed to the whole system as any-body—while we are at no pains to understand, accurately, the nature, relations and operations of the slave-system—does not prepare us to administer the needed rebuke. Let there be light on this subject in the church,—light which is not darkness, nor dimness,—and there will be intelligent interest—intelligent action.

Again : the rebuke should be administered *explicitly*.

If you would convince a man of his error, your labor must bear upon that error, not doubtfully ; but so that what you mean shall be understood. Thus you rebuke the intemperate man. You see him in the way to ruin,—scattering desolation around him in his course. You speak to him. You take him kindly by the hand ; and you ask him to be a man. But you are explicit. You tell him he must abandon his cups totally and forever. You do not leave upon his mind any doubt, whether or not you believe him to be a drunkard. So it must be in our rebuke of the slave-holder. Be kind. Be intelli-

gent. And be, also, explicit. Nothing effectual is accomplished till we are understood to mean—that slave-holding is sinful; that it is a grievous wrong to man,—oppression of the deepest die,—and war upon man's Maker. This being so, let it be so expressed. There is nothing harsh—nothing unkind in this. If our neighbor's house is on fire, it is not cruel to tell him of it, although, it may be, you are under the necessity of arousing him from his quiet slumber. In rebuking slave-holders, we should not leave upon their mind any doubt of our full conviction,—that slave-holding is sinful, not in the *abstract* merely, but in the *concrete*, also. Nor should we give them a hiding-place under supposed-possible-cases of sinless,—if not virtuous,—slave-holding. The prophet was explicit in rebuking the king of Israel for his flagrant sin. True—he did it under cover of a most ingenious parable. But when he perceived that David did not understand it, he spoke out,—“Thou art the man.” Then the king understood him,—and he felt, and bowed in penitence before God for his “*blood-guiltiness*.” Such let the testimony of the church be against slave-holding,—and it will, under God, be efficient.

Once more ;—rebuke should be administered *perseveringly*.

“Line upon line and precept upon precept.” And this, whether men will hear or forbear. Christian discretion should be exercised; but there should be no withholding of salutary remonstrance and entreaty. It is a great moral duty on a great moral question. And the amount involved can have no adequate expression by numerical figures. We do not dismiss our physician, and abandon his medicine, because the first dose of his prescription has not effected a cure. We have here a powerful, moral prescription by the great physician, for the removal of an inveterate moral malady; and, if it be followed perseveringly, according to the direction, it will restore health to that system, which is fainting and dying under the disease. If we feel Christian regard for the crushed millions, or for the thousands who are crushing them, it

becomes us to lift up our "voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions,"—and cease not, till the day of deliverance and salvation.

Finally ;—the rebuke should be administered *unitedly*.

The whole church of God, with one accord, should raise her voice in unbroken remonstrance of this mighty sin. Has she done it? Will she do it? Is she ready? We mourn over the deep agonies of the wretched slaves ;—and well we may. But we are not to forget, that the inflictors of these sufferings, blind in their delusions, doom themselves to a far deeper curse. The act of voluntary emancipation by those to whom it belongs to perform that act, would be as truly deliverance to the slave-holders as to the slaves. To this, all the history of emancipation bears witness. Such an event would be a grand jubilee to all concerned. Let the redeemed of the Lord, then, in the spirit of their faith and love, come *as one* to the duty of bearing undivided testimony against that system of oppression, which is now shaking this nation to its deep foundations. The time is passed, if it ever was, when we can, innocently, be silent. And let me say,—the time is pre-eminently favorable for action. American Slavery is assailed. Its true character is laid open in the light of the sun. The world is waking and reading it ; and this is an ordeal, which it cannot bear. The united rebuke of the church now would tell most effectively on the issue,—nay, more—it is fully believed, would *decide* it. Nor should we delay for perfect harmony of views touching specific modes of rebuke. Let us come to the work as brethren,—speak and act where we can,—and be careful ;—that all our doings and all our sayings tend to break down the slave-holding of the land,—and not to cripple the influence of one another. We are brethren in this matter. It is a common cause. God is calling us to work. The crisis approaches. Providence favors. The contest is hard, it is true. It must be so ;—for Liberty and Slavery are the antagonists. Long

have they stood aloof, casting at each other the significant look. More recently, they have been reaching forth,—cautiously, to feel each others locks. Now they have approached and grappled ; and in their giant struggle, they are convulsing the land,—convulsing the church. Nor will they struggle alone. They are calling for our aid ; and we are giving it to the one, or to the other. There can be no neutrality. Remember, also, that facilities for intercommunication are now great and constantly increasing. What is done in a corner is felt through the land. Is it not, then, a favorable time to act efficiently for liberty and right ? The issue will come. Slavery will end—peaceably, we hope. And may the church, bought with the blood of Christ and baptized into his spirit, be found on the right side,—so that it may be said of her in truth, “she hath done what she could.”

My Beloved Brethren and Friends ;—The day of retribution is at hand. God is just. The oppressed millions in our land, fathers and mothers,—sons and daughters,—brothers and sisters,—all made of the “one blood,” are lifting up their cry to us. The circumstances and prospects of the thousands and tens of thousands, who are upholding this system of oppression, present their claim for our sympathy and faithful rebuke. All the great interests of our country—social, civil, political and religious, reach out to us the imploring hand ; and with one voice they ask us to do what we can, upon the principles, and in the spirit of our religion, to hasten the end of these days of wrath and of ruin. What you and I do in this cause we must do quickly. We hasten to our account. Here now we stand—the work before us. And what shall we say more ?—With sorrow for the past,—

“ O God of Power ! we turn
In penitence to Thee ;—
Bid our loved land the lesson learn,
To bid the SLAVE BE FREE.”